

Message Text

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44

ACTION ARA-20

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 CU-04 OMB-01 OPR-02 SIL-01 LAB-06

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-10

PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SS-15 USIA-15 AID-20 PC-04 NIC-01

SY-10 USSS-00 OS-03 OC-06 CCO-00 NEA-10 RSR-01 /158 W

----- 097358

R 301415Z AUG 73

FM AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 2828

INFO AMEMBASSY QUITO

USCINCSO

S E C R E T GUAYAQUIL 921

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ASEC, PINS, EC

SUB: SITUATION GUAYAQUIL

REF: GUAYAQUIL 860 AND PREVIOUS

1. GOVERNMENT ORDERED ALL SCHOOLS OPENED MONDAY. PUBLIC ELEMENTARY AND SECONDARY SCHOOLS REMAINED CLOSED, HOWEVER, BECAUSE PROFESSORS ENFORCED CONTINUED STRIKE. FLASH DEMONSTRATIONS OCCURRED IN GUAYAQUIL BUT PUT DOWN. PRIVATE SCHOOLS OPENED BUT SEVERAL INCLUDING AMERICAN SCHOOL RECEIVED MENACING PHONE CALLS, PARENTS WERE AFRAID TO SEND CHILDREN, AND SCHOOL BUS TRAVEL GENERALLY RESTRICTED. THUS PRIVATE SCHOOLS ALSO OPERATED BUT AT RESTRICTED LEVEL. A NUMBER OF OTHER TOWNS ON THE COAST ALSO SUFFERED DISTURBANCES RELATED TEACHER STRIKE.

2. MILITARY HAS BEEN ON ALERT WITH TANKS IN TOWN. LEADERS OF TEACHERS UNION (UNE) HAVE BEEN ARRESTED AND SOME STUDENT LEADERS, INCLUDING VLADIMAR TORRES OF UNIVERSITY STUDENTS FEDERATION (FEUE) GAVE THEMSELVES UP UNDER THREAT MACHINE GUN FIRE UPON THEM IN OLD UNIVERSITY BUILDING. (MILITARY ZONE COMMANDER, COL. RODOLFO LEIVA, TOLD ME THIS WAS FEIGNED THREAT AS "PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE"

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MEASURE). A NUMBER OF THESE LEADERS ARE IN FIFTH BRIGADE HEAD-

QUARTERS AND PROBABLY WILL BE SENT TO ORIENTE.

3. RECTOR OF UNIVERSITY OF GUAYAQUIL ALSO ARRESTED BUT RELEASED WITH STATEMENT IN PRESS THAT ACTION WAS "ERROR". ZONE COMMANDER SAID, HOWEVER, HE PERSONALLY ORDERED HIS ARREST AND CONFINEMENT FOR 2 HOURS. REPORTS CIRCULATE HE WAS BEATEN. ZONE COMMANDER BOASTED TO ME (AND VISITING POLITICAL SECTION CHIEF FROM EMBASSY QUITO) OF "CARESSES" ARRESTED STUDENT AND TEACHER LEADERS WERE GIVEN WITH A BILLY CLUB.

4. ON EVENING OF TUESDAY 28 AUGUST NEW UNIVERSITY AREA CORDONED OFF BY HEAVY MILITARY DETAIL WITH DRAWN BAYONETS. NO REPORTS YET EXACTLY WHAT HAPPENED BUT ZONE COMMANDER SHOWED DETERMINATION PICK UP REST OF AGITATORS AND LEADERS AND TO DEAL WITH SITUATION WITH MAILED FIST.

5. WE HAVE INDICATION THERE IS STRONG DIFFERENCE AMONG MILITARY OVER JUST HOW TOUGH TO BE. POLICE SOURCES TELL US THAT IN JOINT POLICE AND MILITARY MEETINGS OVER SITUATION (CITY NOW DIVIDED GEOGRAPHICALLY IN FOUR PARTS AMONG THREE MILITARY SERVICES AND POLICE) GOVERNOR RENAN OLMEDO (NAVY ADMIRAL) WAS ADVOCATE OF VELVET GLOVE TREATMENT. THE IMPLICATION IS WEAKNESS ON HIS PART BUT I DOUBT IT. HE IS MUCH MORE SUAVE AND POLITICALLY-MINDED THAN MILITARY ZONE COMMANDER, WHO ALMOST SADISTICALLY ADVOCATED BRUTALITY AND REPRESSION. OLMEDO, ON OCCASION, IN CONVERSATION WITH ME HAS ALSO ADVOCATED STRONG MEASURES, FOR INSTANCE, "QUIET AND PERMANENT DISAPPEARANCE" OF DRUG TRAFFICKERS AND TERRORISTS. THEREFORE, WE ARE NOT SURE WHERE DIFFERENCES LIE, IF THEY INDEED EXIST.

6. LEADER IN ASAAD BUCARAM'S GROUP (CFP) EXPRESSED OPINION SITUATION VERY SERIOUS IN SPITE EFFORTS (AND INDEED THEY ARE STRONG) OF GOVERNMENT TO SMOOTH OVER AND CREATE IMPRESSION ALL IS TRANQUIL. HE EXPECTS RESIGNATION OF PRESIDENT RODRIGUEZ WITHIN 2 WEEKS TO BE REPLACED BY ANOTHER MILITARY OFFICER. I THINK THIS IS ONLY SELF-SERVING HOPE. BUCARAM, ACCORDING THIS CONTACT, BELIEVES HE HAS ENOUGH SUPPORT AMONG SECOND AND LOWER LEVEL MILITARY OFFICERS TO INFLUENCE WHOEVER MIGHT THEN COME TO POWER TO CAUSE HIM PROMISE EARLY ELECTION WHICH HE (BUCARAM) WOULD OF COURSE WIN WITH "70 PERCENT" OF VOTES. MEANWHILE BUCARAM LYING LOW BEING
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CAREFUL NOT PUT HIMSELF IN NOOSE OR LIMELIGHT.

7. MY PERSONAL FEELING IS THAT SITUATION IS INDEED TENSE AND SERIOUS. GOVERNMENT HAS TIGER BY TAIL HERE. IT CANNOT SHOW WEAKNESS BY, FOR INSTANCE, ACCEDING TO DEMANDS DISMISSAL MINISTER OF EDUCATION. EVERY DAY SCHOOLS CONTINQE IN EFFECT CLOSED AND WITH EVERY DEATH OF STUDENTS IN DEMONSTRATIONS THE MORE PRECARIOUS THE SITUATION WILL BECOME. WHETHER THE GOVERNMENT CAN NEUTRALIZE

THIS HYDRA-HEADED SITUATION BY FORCING LEADERS INTO EXILE IS QUESTIONABLE. NEGOTIATIONS WITH STUDENT AND TEACHER LEADERS, WHOSE TACTIC IS TO PROVOKE OUTRAGES, APPEAR DOUBTFUL FOR NOW. WE MUST WAIT TO SEE WHETHER WHATEVER FORCE GOVERNMENT, WITH PROBABLY DIFFERENCES OF OPINION ON APPROACH, CAN MUSTER, AND THE FEAR IT CAN INSTILL WILL HOLD SITUATION HERE IN TOW. PERHAPS EVERYONE WILL SOON BECOME TIRED AND NORMAL TIMES WILL RETURN UNTIL NEXT OCCASION FOR STUDENTS TO GO OUT ON LARK OR ANOTHER CRISIS OCCURS.

8. I WOULD PREFER IN VIEW OF SENSITIVE INTELLIGENCE SOURCES MENTIONED (I.E., GOVERNOR AND MILITARY ZONE COMMANDER) THAT THIS MESSAGE BE EXEMPT FROM GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION SCHEDULE BUT I HAVE NO AUTHORITY TO EXEMPT. THIS AUTHORITY SHOULD BE GRANTED TO CONSUL GENERAL AT THIS POST.
LUBENSKY

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NNN

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